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At Harvard, CIA official stresses need for ties to academia

On Thursday, Robert M. Gates, deputy director for intelligence of the Central Intelligence Agency, delivered an address at Harvard University on relations between the agency and academia.

In it, he said that the agency has dramatically expanded its contacts with the academic community in recent years, and said that consulting for the agency doesn't abridge academic freedom. He also announced that the CIA will relax rules that had imposed some secrecy restrictions on scholarly research.

Following are excerpts from his address.

My remarks tonight center on two simple propositions:

First, preserving the liberty of this nation is fundamental to and prerequisite for the preservation of academic freedom: the university community cannot prosper and protect freedom of inquiry oblivious to the fortunes of the nation.

Second, in defending the nation and our liberties, the federal government needs to have recourse to the best minds in the country, including those in the academic community. Tensions inevitably accompany the relationship between defense, intelligence and academe, but mutual need and benefit require reconciliation or elimination of such tensions.

The agency's relations with the academic world have improved in recent years for a variety of reasons, including developments abroad and recognition in the academic community that CIA, together with the departments of State and Defense, has been an important and useful supporter of area and regional studies and foreign language studies in the United States.

In some areas of research, such as on the Soviet Union, our cooperation for nearly 40 years has remained both close and constant. This also has been the case often in the fields of economics and physical sciences. On the other hand, there have been much more pronounced ups and downs in our relationships with political scientists and allied social sciences, particularly among those with expertise in the Third World.

There is [however] one constant in the history of this relationship and in its future as well: our need for your help, and the opportunity you have to contribute to a better informed policymaking process by cooperating with us.

A principal factor in our pursuit of contact with scholars is our perception that quality analysis on the incredible range of issues with which we must cope requires not only dogged research but also imagination, creativity and insight. Large organizations, and particularly government bureaucracies, are not famous for their en-

couragement of these characteristics - although there is surprisingly more than you might think. Similarly, to rely solely on information funneled through government channels inevitably would constrict the range of views and information needed. We are looking for people to challenge our views, to argue with us, to criticize our assessments constructively, to make us think and defend and to go back to the drawing board when we have missed something

important. In short, we don't want scholars to tell us what they think we want to hear. That would make our entire effort pointless.

We have again looked at our rules and policies as a result of the controversy here at Harvard, and this too has produced some modifications. For example, the Directorate of Intelligence now explicitly tells any organization or individual organizing a conference on our behalf that the participants in the conference should be informed in advance of our sponsoring role.

As a result of the controversy here at Harvard and expressions of concern about this policy, we reexamined this issue with considerable care. In the first place, there are certain circumstances under which disclosure of our

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funding of research may be required, and we of course comply. Beyond this, we have decided that our interest in obtaining the cooperation of this country's scholars and allaying the misunderstandings and suspicions that have grown out of our earlier approach warrants at least some change in our policy. Accordingly, CIA will henceforth permit acknowledgement of our funding of research that is later independently published by a scholar unless (1) the scholar requests privacy or (2) we determine that formal, public association of CIA with a specific topic or subject would prove damaging to the United States. Any acknowledgement of CIA funding would be accompanied by a statement to the effect that the views expressed are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of CIA or of the US government.

Consultation and cooperation with CIA on the problems this nation faces abroad do not threaten academic freedom. However, I believe that freedom of inquiry is limited, a desire to render public service sometimes tragically thwarted, and our nation disadvantaged, by those who would deny a scholar's willingness to work with the American intelligence service in assessing the world around us.